

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALMATY 001436

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/CACEN (JMUDGE), EUR/PRA (JCONLON), AND
NP/PTR (ECAMERON)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/11/2015

TAGS: [KNNP](#) [KSCA](#) [KZ](#) [PARM](#) [TBIO](#) [POLITICAL](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: REPONSE TO INQUIRY ON BIOKOMBINAT

REF: A. 04 STATE 271994

[1](#)B. ALMATY 289

Classified By: CDA Mark Asquino, reasons 1.4 (e) and (h).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The GOK has investigated the USG's concerns regarding dangerous pathogens at the Biokombinat facility in Almaty and discovered a number of strains which, under Kazakhstani law, should be moved to a centralized GOK storage facility. The GOK does not consider the strains to be a proliferation threat. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Post submitted Ref A inquiry regarding the possible presence of dangerous pathogens at the Biokombinat facility in Almaty via diplomatic note on December 29, 2004. The Ambassador underscored the importance of the issue in his introductory call with Minister of Education and Science Aitimova on January 19 (Ref B).

[1](#)3. (SBU) On March 29, post received the GOK's response via diplomatic note 10/2-1-733, dated March 19, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The note stated that "A committee consisting of representatives from Republic of Kazakhstan government agencies has conducted an official inspection of Biokom LLP. During the investigation it was established that 28 pathogenic trains, which are carriers of 14 diseases, are being stored at this company. These infectious strains do not belong to the category of highly dangerous pathogens and are not suitable for use as strains of highly dangerous infections. Biokom is capable of using them to produce medicines to fight several veterinary diseases. In accordance with Republic of Kazakhstan order no. 850 of July 30, 2002, on "The Republican Microorganism Collection," and Republic of Kazakhstan law no. 339-2 of July 10, 2002, on "Veterinary Medicine," strains of microorganisms used in veterinary medicine are subject to strict accountability and should be transferred for storage to the National Strains and Microorganisms Collection Depository."

[1](#)4. (C) POEC chief met with Ministry of Education and Science Chief of Staff Rakhmetkazhi Bersimbayev, Abdikarim Zeyullin of the MES Department of Science, and Bakhyt Kutubayev of the MES Department of Science on April 6 to follow up on the GOK's diplomatic note. Bersimbayev confirmed that the interagency inspection team, established by order of Minister Aitimova, had discovered some pathogens that presented a public health risk; the GOK did not consider it to be a non-proliferation issue. The Almaty akimat had decided the private firm now running the Biokombinat facility, Biokom, would not be allowed to continue production within the city limits of Almaty. (Note: The unstated implication was the pathogens would be moved. End note.)

[1](#)5. (C) POEC chief noted that the Embassy had received a letter from G. Kashikova, the director of a private firm named "Beta Star" (the founder of Biokom), denying that the company possessed pathogenic or virulent vaccines. In the letter, Kashikova complained that the Embassy's diplomatic note and the resulting investigation would lead to the forced seizure of their staple product and possibly to the firm's bankruptcy. Kutubayev characterized the letter as a natural negative reaction by the firm to the GOK's assertion of its oversight rights regarding dangerous pathogens. Zeynullin stated that the firm would be able to continue its business under the new restrictions.

ORDWAY

NNNN